

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 21 and 23-27 are pending in this application. Claims 4-12 and 22 stand withdrawn, and claims 13-20 are canceled.

By this Amendment, claim 23 is added to recite the subject matter of claim 1, and more detailed features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Figs. 1, 3 and 4; and paragraphs [0019] and [0036]. Claims 24-27 are added to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Figs. 3 and 7, and paragraphs [0021], [0026], [0029], [0035] and [0042].

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks Examiner Menon for the courtesy extended to Applicant's representative, Mr. Luo, during the October 5, 2006 personal interview. The substance of the personal interview is incorporated in the following remarks.

As discussed during the personal interview, claim 21 reads on the elected species. Thus, examination of claim 21 is respectfully requested when claims 1-3 and new claims 23-27 are considered.

As discussed during the personal interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge receipt of the certified copy of the Priority Document submitted March 18, 2004.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,143,058 to Dahlgren et al. ("Dahlgren"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 over Dahlgren, but does not identify specifically where each and every element recited in claims 1-3 is disclosed or taught in Dahlgren. For example, the Office Action does not identify where the claimed features "regarding" and "the surface of a pore" are disclosed in Dahlgren. Applicants respectfully submit that such a rejection does not establish a *prima facie* case of anticipation. The Examiner is required to

identify specifically where each claimed feature is found in a reference to establish a *prima facie* case of anticipation, so that Applicants can recognize and seek to counter the grounds for rejection. See Chester v. Miller, 15 USPQ2d 1333, 1337 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

In particular, the Office Action merely asserts that Dahlgren discloses a method at col. 12, lines 1-47. Then, the Office Action conclusory asserts that Dahlgren's method is identical to the method disclosed in paragraphs [0035] and [0036] of the specification of the present application. However, the Office Action fails to identify which method step of Dahlgren is believed to correspond to the claimed method step of "regarding an amount of particulate material sticking to the surface of a partition wall constituting a cell of the porous cell structure and the surface of a pore in the partition wall as the water absorption," as recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, paragraph [0036] of the present application describes "a water absorbed state is obtained in which the steam sticks to the surface 3 of the partition wall 2 constituting the cell and the surfaces of the pores 4 inside the partition wall 2." The cited portions of Dahlgren do not disclose or suggest this feature. Thus, it is improper for the Office Action to simply assert that the cited portions of Dahlgren disclose a method that is "identical" to the method disclosed in paragraphs [0035] and [0036] of the present application.

In view of the above, the Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of anticipation.

Furthermore, Dahlgren does not disclose or suggest the feature of "a particulate material sticking to the surface of the partition wall constituting a cell... and the surface of the pore in the partition wall." Thus, Dahlgren does not disclose each and every element recited in claim 1, and claims 2 and 3 depending therefrom.

During the personal interview, Examiner Menon asserted that Dahlgren discloses an "adsorbent" that is associated with "adsorption." The Examiner explained that "adsorption"

indicates a surface phenomenon.

However, even if Dahlgren discloses a surface phenomenon, such a surface phenomenon does not disclose or suggest absorption by the surface of a pore, because the surface phenomenon of Dahlgren is likely at the surface of a partition wall of a honeycomb structure. As discussed in the background section of the specification, the prior art only considers absorption at the surface of partition walls, without considering absorption by the surface of a pore.

During the personal interview, the Examiner also expressed concerns on how to achieve a status in which particulate material is only stuck on the surface of a pore without filling the space inside the pore. However, such concerns are irrelevant. For example, claim 1 is directed to a method which regards an amount for establishing a standard. It is irrelevant, and claim 1 is not required to recite, how the amount is measured, because a step of measuring the amount is not required in the method that is directed to regarding a measured amount as standard, as long as the measured amount is available. The measuring of the amount may be the subject matter of a separate method, or a sub-step to be recited in a dependent claim of claim 1.

Furthermore, a method for having a particulate material stick only to the surface of a pore is described in the specification at, for example, Figs. 3 and 7; and paragraphs [0021], [0026], [0029], [0035] and [0042]. Thus, one of ordinary skill is enabled to practice the subject matter claimed in claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

Claim 23 is patentable over Dahlgren at least in view of the patentability of claim 1, because claim 23 recites the subject matter of claim 1, as well as for additional features it recites.

Claims 24-27 are patentable at least in view of the patentability of claim 1, from

which they depend, as well as for additional features they recite. For example, Dahlgren only discloses placing a sample in a humid chamber. See col. 12, lines 1-47. Dahlgren does not disclose or suggest charging a particulate material by pressure feeding, as recited in claim 24. Also, Dahlgren does not disclose or suggest the use of suction, a step of removing excessive particulate material, and spraying an air shower, as recited in claims 25, 26 and 27, respectively.

As indicated in the July 27, 2006 Restriction Requirement, claim 1 is generic to all species. Thus, rejoinder of non-elected claims 4-12 and 22 is respectfully requested in view of the patentability of claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-12 and 21-27 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Amendment Transmittal

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